(e) whether it is also a fact that the provision relating to fixation of prices of imported bulk drugs has been dispensed with; and

(f) if so, how indigenous production will be encouraged?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI J. VENGAL RAO): (a) to (f) The required details to the extent available would be collected and laid on the Table of the House.

Recruitment in Postal Department

1437. DR. NARREDDY THULASI REDDY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to lift the ban on the recruitment of staff in Postal department;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) if not, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI GIRIDHAR GOMANGO): (a) There is no ban to fill up the vacancies arising out of promotion, retirement, death, resignation, dismissal/removal or deputation. Newly created posts can also be filled up wherever justified and necessary with the approval of the Government.

(b) No recruitment has taken place in the grade of Postal Asstts. because a large number of RTPs recruited before 1984 have still to be absorbed. There is however, a ban on the creation of new posts, except with the approval of the Government.

(c) The only reason for not recruiting Postal Assistants is the non-availability of vacancies, which are filled up by promotion and by RTPs (Reserve Trained Pool candidates).

Communication facilities in Bastar District

1438. SHRI AJIT P. K. JOGI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is an acute shortage of communication facilities in Bastar district of Madhya Pradesh; and

(b) if so, what steps are being taken to provide at least the basic minimum communication facility to this largest tribal district of the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI GIRIDHAR GOMANGO): (a) and (b) No, Sir. At present one MAX-II exchange with 600 lines capacity, 14 MAX-III exchanges with 465 lines capacity and three manual exchanges with 250 lines capacity are existing in the district. In addition 130 LDPTs are also working in the District. On the postal front, the district is now being served by a network of 552 post offices. During the current year it is proposed to open 2 more post offices.

Loan to IDPL and HAL

1439. SHRI M. KADHARSHA: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to refer to the answer to Starred Question 103 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 2nd May, 1988 and state:

(a) what was the amount of loan given to IDPL and HAL out of the Drug-Price Equalisation Account;

(b) when was this loan given to each of these two units and in how many instalments it is repayable by both the companies; and

(c) what is the rate of interest this loan carries and by when the first instalment of the loan would be due for repayment?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI J. VENGAL RAO): (a) No loan was given to M/s. HAL and M/s.